Not Urgent Public Business

Speaker Refuses TCA Debate Bid

Speaker of the House Hugh Shantz, aided by Social Credit MLAs, threw out a CCF appeal in the legislature yesterday to hold an immediate emergency debate on the impending transfer of the airline service between Victoria and Vancouver.

Gordon Dowding (CCF, Burnaby) sought to bring in a motion under urgent public business which would have requested Attorney-General Bonner, now in Ottawa, to make immediate representations to the federal government with a view to preserving the existing Trans-Canada Air Line service between Victoria and Vancouver.

Speaker Shantz ruled it was not urgent public business and his ruling was challenged by Mr. Dowding.

Divisions were called and the speaker was upheld 34-12. Victoria, Saanich and Esquimalt Socred MLAs voted to uphold the speaker's ruling, but Archie Gibbs (Lib., Oak Bay) voted against it. George Gregory, (Lib., Victoria) was not in the House.

Council

Industry Agent Studied

Hiring of an industrial commissioner to help draw industry to Victoria will be considered by city council.

Aldermen yesterday instructed finance committee to weigh the pros and cons and report back at budget time.

The idea was put forward by Ald. Hugh Ramsay after he had received inquiries about Victoria from four firms. (Council approved sending the firms all the information possible.)

A commissioner, Ald. Ramsay said, could analyze the area, probably making zoning suggestions, and be an envoy to "sell industries on what Victoria has to offer."

He and Ald. Elmer McEwen cited examples of Ontario cities making special efforts to induce industries to locate within their boundaries.

Ald. Austin Curtis said he was glad to hear the proposal; he had had in mind suggesting establishment of an industrial department in city hall.

A firm interested in Victoria had been told by a senior official a couple of years ago that Victoria didn't want industry, he said, and "that sort of thing has got to be changed."

Ald. Ramsay agreed, but said it should be clear "we are not hoping to attract big industry that would deterioate the town."

Senior Citizens

Porch Drive Planned

Victoria Senior Citizens' Housing Society plans a porch-light drive in the near future to help complete the society's 26-unit housing block in Victoria West and help start another block.

Announcement of the plans to hold the drive were announced at the annual meeting of the society last night. The possibility of holding a car raffle is also being investigated.

A. W. Toone, president of Victoria Labor Council, and a member of the society's board of management, told members that unions will possibly provide up to 4,000 helpers for the drive.

The society plans to approach the provincial government for grants of land suitable for the erection of housing units for pensioners, similar to the one now being built.

City council will also be asked to give the society first option on any lands to be sold for non-payment of taxes.

Mrs. May Campbell was re-elected president of the society.

Manslaughter Case Delayed

A further adjournment until Feb. 19 of preliminary hearing of a manslaughter charge against Adam Reisch, Veyaness Road, was ordered in Central Saanich police court yesterday, pending arrival here of an RCMP ballistics expert from Regina.

The charge arose out of the Dec. 21 death of Arie Schut, 6, who was shot through the chest while playing on land near Adam Reisch's property.

New and old styles in fire-fighting head gear are shown by fire chief William Venables and recently retired fireman, Frank Harrison. Mr. Harrison wore the old leather helmet when he started fire fighting nearly 47 years ago. — (Margaret E. Trebett photo.)

★ ★ ★

Port Alberni Veteran Retires

He'll Jump No Longer At Fire Siren

By MARGARET TREBETT

PORT ALBERNI — A fast man with the hose reel in early days here, Frank Harrison, D.C.M., now 71, will no longer have to jump at the sound of the fire siren.

After 47 years as an active member of Port Alberni volunteer fire brigade, Mr. Harrison has retired on advice of his doctor. He was elevated to honorary membership on retirement and so will not break an association with the organization he helped to form at the time the city was incorporated in 1912.

He was present in the old shack where the organizational meeting was held and was among the members who waited through 1912 in vain for a fire to break out to test the efficiency of the eager young brigade, and he was on hand to help wrestle with the hose on Nov. 3, 1913, when the city's newly installed water system was used for the first time to fight a fire.

KNOCKED FLAT

No reducers had been installed when mains were laid and, consequently, the pressure on lower Argyle Street was intense. The fire in Mah Bing's little wooden building was extinguished — and the charred walls were knocked flat by the force of water from the hose.

Mr. Harrison, who has served with the fire brigade continuously except for his years with the Canadian Army during the First World War, was chief of the brigade for five years during the 1920s.

DROVE TEAM

Back in the early years of the brigade while Chief Venables was supervising the purchase of equipment, Mr. Harrison was employed as a teamster and stage coach driver by the late Sam Roseborough.

He hitched two of his boss' teams to the city's chemical wagon on the night of Feb. 8, 1913, to dash over the rough dirt road to Alberni where the home of C. F. Bishop, Southgate Street, had burst into flames. The house was lost but the nearby store was saved.

This was the first of the "big" fires Frank has worked on during his career as a fireman.

CITY FIREBELL

He recalls the city's firebell, hung on a wooden trestle near the corner of Third Avenue and Argyle, the hose reel pulled by hand over roads in the making, the six dozen fire-buckets placed at strategic spots around the city.

In all the brigade's history there have been only two fatalities by fire.

CITY MENACED

A bush fire which threatened the city in 1924 was one of the most memorable incidents of the veteran fireman's career. For days flames licked around the edges of the city, firemen were on 24-hour duty and housewives sat on their roof tops with buckets of water.

Hotel fires, waterfront blazes, including the huge assembly wharf conflagration in August, 1947, and one on a fish boat where the firemen had to take the hose by row-boat to the scene.

These and many more are remembered by the old fireman who has seen Port Alberni's department start from scratch to become one of the best equipped volunteer brigades in the province.

Peat contains between 80 and 90 per cent moisture, compared to about three per cent in anthracite coal.

Labor Man Complains

18 Cents for MLA Meant $1.32 to Boss

A labor man told the legislature Thursday that labor is being unfairly blamed for increasing the cost of living through demands for pay increases. It was management that was getting the cream.

Cedric Cox (CCF - Burnaby) hit out at Social Credit critics of labor. He said:

"I'm a laboring man and I've been a union member for 20 years and I've never heard of irresponsible leadership or seen any gangsters."

Then Mr. Cox, a metal worker, gave the house this example of what he said is happening.

His union managed to get an 18-cent-an-hour increase for its members. At that time the firm for which he was working was paying him $2.50 an hour for his services and charging the customers $5 an hour.

After the raise he got $2.68 an hour and the company charged the customers $6.50 an hour for his services.

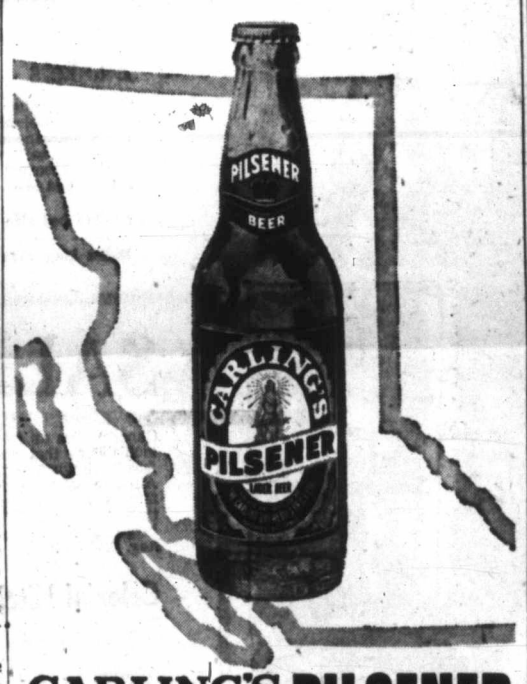
"I got an 18-cent-an-hour increase," he said, "and the company got a $1.32-an-hour increase."

He felt the government's new plan to pick up part of the fees of bright university students a good thing. But it could go too far. The best students didn't always make the best doctors and lawyers.

And just because "the United States is hysterical over the advance of Russia" he didn't believe Canada should go all out for engineers. He didn't want to see thousands of "sputnik mechanics" produced at the expense of the liberal arts and social sciences.

Samuel Champlain established a dairy herd with imported cattle at Cap Tourmente, Que., in 1608.

B.C.'s ORIGINAL PILSENER



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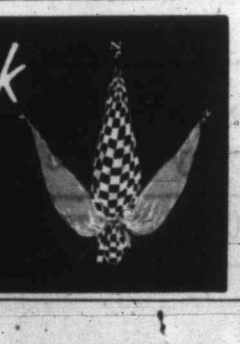

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